

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 18-20, 22-27, and 30-36 are presently pending in this case. Claims 18, 30, and 33 are amended and Claims 21, 28, and 29 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer by the present amendment. As amended Claims 18, 30, and 33 are supported by the pending claims, no new matter is added.

In the outstanding Official Action, the drawings were objected to; Claims 18, 20, 23-25, and 32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by Hattori et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,424,705, hereinafter "Hattori"); Claims 18, 21-23, 26-28, 30, 31, 33, 35, and 36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over McDearmon et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 20040017190, hereinafter "McDearmon") in view of Jansseune (U.S. Patent No. 6,043,646); and Claim 19 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over McDearmon in view of Jansseune and further in view of Vig et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,781,005, hereinafter "Vig"). However, Claim 34 was allowed and Claim 29 was indicated as including allowable subject matter.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the allowance of Claim 34 and the indication that Claim 29 includes allowable subject matter. In this regard, Claim 18 is amended to include the subject matter of Claim 29 and intervening Claim 21. Accordingly, Claim 18, and all claims dependent therefrom, are allowable.

With regard to the objection to the drawings, a new Figure 20 which illustrates the subject matter of Claim 25 was submitted September 19, 2008. The Office Action issued December 10, 2008 indicated that such drawing was accepted. Accordingly, the objection to the drawings is believed to be overcome.

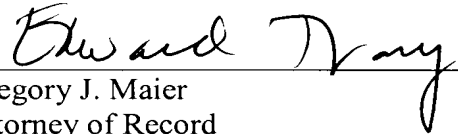
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Accordingly, the pending claims are believed to be in condition for formal allowance.

An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gregory J. Maier", is written over a horizontal line.

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